

# TOWN OF WALWORTH

## ORDINANCE NO. 121719-5

### AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING MEETING PARTICIPATION BY TELEPHONE OR OTHER ELECTRONIC MEANS (Telecommunications)

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board finds it in the public interest to facilitate attendance by members of the various Town governmental bodies to promote full debate by a diversity of viewpoints on matters that come before such bodies; and

**WHEREAS**, private and professional obligations of the members of such bodies may prevent them from being physically present during meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board desires to facilitate participation in meetings by the members in the fullest possible manner consistent with full and transparent openness to members of the public and consistent with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Town Board of the Town of Walworth, Walworth County, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

#### Participation via Telecommunications.

In the event that a regular or special meeting of the Town Board or Plan Commission is scheduled and a Town Board Member or Plan Commission Member cannot be physically present at the meeting due to prior commitments (remote member), the Member may participate via telecommunications under the following conditions:

1. There is a quorum physically present in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the time that the meeting is called. Under no circumstances shall attendance via telecommunications be used to constitute a quorum.
2. The Member who desires to attend a meeting via telecommunications shall contact the Town Clerk-Treasurer or the Meeting Chairperson as soon as practically possible to advise them that his or her presence at a meeting will be physically impossible.
3. The Clerk-Treasurer will make arrangements to have the telephone handset available for use in the Meeting Room.
4. The handset or other communication device must be placed in the Meeting Room so that the member not physically present can hear and be heard by all who are physically present including the members of the public.
5. Members attending via telecommunications shall attend the entire meeting and may not attend for certain selected items of interest and then disconnect.
6. Members attending via telecommunications may participate in debate the same as any other Member and vote at the appropriate time via roll call. To avoid confusion, the Chairperson or designated chair will ask the remote Member, prior to any votes taken, for his or her comments on a particular issue.
7. The Members attending the meeting via telecommunications shall initiate the contact with the Clerk from wherever their physical presence may be at least ten (10) minutes prior to the meeting to ensure a timely start of the board meeting.
8. Failure to establish the connection at that time shall result in the remote Member not being able to attend the meeting.
9. Any fees associated with this contact shall be at the remote Member's expense.

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A remote Member shall not be permitted to participate in a closed session of the Board, and must be disconnected from the telecommunications immediately after the Board votes to enter into a closed session. The remote Member shall not be permitted to participate in any action, if any, when the Board adjourns to open session following a closed session, and prior to adjournment.

Any Ordinance or parts thereof, inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

This Ordinance shall be effective from and after its passage by the Town Board and publication as required by law.

The above and foregoing Ordinance was duly adopted at a meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Walworth held on December 17, 2019, by a vote of   3   in favor,   0   against,   0   abstain.

TOWN OF WALWORTH

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
David J. Rowbotham, Town Chair

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve Santeler, Supervisor #1

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
William Pearce, Supervisor #2

Attest: \_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Marie Baker, Town Clerk-Treasurer

(Seal)